

REMARKS

Claims 21-40 are pending in this application. Claims 1-20 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the underlying subject matter. Claims 21, 22, 25-33, 36, and 38-40 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

The present amendment accompanies the RCE filed herewith under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114. The present amendment includes amendments to the claims filed in the response dated November 19, 2004. The Advisory Action indicates that those amendments were not entered because they raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search.

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw all outstanding grounds of rejection. Applicants respectfully request allowance of the application.

The Office Action objects to claims 21-40 under 35 U.S.C. § 132 because of alleged new matter introduced in the claims. The Office Action rejects under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) claims 21-40 as being anticipated by Wood, U.S. Patent No. 6,405,248 (hereinafter *Wood*).

Applicants traverse these rejections. Applicants respectfully submit that the previously submitted claims 21-40 do not claim new matter and are supported by the specification. For example, page 12, lines 11-13 provide support for the claims. However, to further prosecution, Applicants have amended the claims for clarification and to more clearly correspond to the language used in the specification.

As amended, independent claim 21 recites, among other features, “identifying a link directly coupling a host to a first port of a first connector; identifying an intermediate connection which indirectly couples the host to an intermediate port of an intermediate connector, wherein the intermediate connector is not aware of a connection to the first connector and the first connector is not aware of a connection to the intermediate connector.” Support for this claim can be found in the specification at page 12, lines 21-23 and Figure 6, for example. Applicants respectfully submit that the new matter objection is moot and request that this objection be withdrawn.

In addition, Applicants have made amendments to the other claims such as claims 22, 25-33, 36, and 38-40 to overcome the new matter objection. Applicants submit that the objection with respect to these claims is moot and requests that the objection be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 21-40 are in condition for allowance over the applied art.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Wood* does not teach or suggest, at least, “identifying an intermediate connection which indirectly couples the host to an intermediate port of an intermediate connector, wherein the intermediate connector is not aware of a connection to the first connector and the first connector is not aware of a connection to the intermediate connector,” as recited, among other features, in independent claim 21, as presented.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 21 is in condition for allowance over *Wood* for at least these reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Wood* does not teach or suggest, at least, “an intermediate connector indirectly coupled to the host via an intermediate connection, wherein the intermediate connector is not aware of a connection to the first connector and the first connector is not aware of a connection to the intermediate connector,” as recited, among other features, in independent claim 32, as presented. As indicated above, support for this claim can be found in the specification at page 12, lines 21-23 and Figure 6, for example.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 32 is in condition for allowance over *Wood* for at least these reasons.

Claims 22-31 depend from independent claim 21 and claims 33-40 depend from independent claim 32. Therefore, claims 22-31 and 33-40 are in condition for allowance for the reasons stated above and for the additional features recited therein.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that all of the objections and rejections against this application have been fully addressed and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Therefore, withdrawal of the outstanding objections and rejections and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that a personal or telephonic interview would be of value in expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned counsel to arrange for such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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